



STATEMENT ON REPORT OF CO-CHAIRS OF UN SYSTEM-WIDE COHERENCE PROCESS (AUGUST 7, 2009) and UPCOMING GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION

The GEAR Campaign, a network of more than 310 women's, human rights, and social justice groups spanning every region of the world, welcomes the section on the reform of the gender architecture in the report of the Co-Chairs of the UN System-Wide Coherence processⁱ. In particular we welcome the recommendation of the Ambassadors *Juan Antonio Yáñez-Barnuevo* of Spain and *Kaire M. Mbuende* of Namibia "that the General Assembly take action during the current session and decide on the establishment of a composite [women's] entity."

The GEAR Campaign is pleased to see that the part of the report on the new gender entity, whose elements will serve as the basis of this section of the upcoming General Assembly resolution, indicates that the entity would consolidate the four existing women's entitiesⁱⁱ, perform the functions outlined in previous reports of the Secretary-General, including to advance gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, link the normative functions and the operational activities, recognize the universal nature of gender equality, support the normative activities of UN intergovernmental bodies and engage in expanded operational activities at country level.

The Co-Chairs' report further notes an agreement that the new entity be led by an Under-Secretary-General, and that the entity be supported by funds from both the regular UN budget and from voluntary contributions.

We, women and men from around the world, urge the United Nations member states to move swiftly to adopt a resolution on the reform of the gender architecture before the end of this 63rd session of the General Assembly by September 14, 2009. We specifically call for:

Member states to establish the composite entity as described above.

Member states to commit to ambitiously fund the new entity with stable and predictable resources for normative and operational activities *now*. Member states should pledge a minimum of \$1 billion USD for the first phase of the new gender entity, with the emphasis on increasing core program resources for in country operational activities, with additional funds to expand programs to more countries over time. Sustained commitment and substantive increases in core funding and for operational activities of the new entity is crucial for its success. Furthermore, it is critical that the new entity have delegated authority on financial matters and human resources, similar to other UN funds and programs, to operate effectively at the country level.

ⁱ <http://www.un.org/ga/president/63/issues/swc/swc70809.pdf>

ⁱⁱ The Office of the Special Adviser for Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and the International Institute for Research and Training for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

Member states to agree on the establishment of an Executive Board to oversee the entity's operational work that is regionally diverse; takes account of the entity's broad mandate and universal coverage; and provides systematically for meaningful participation of civil society, particularly women's organizations (similar to representation on the HIV/AIDS Program Coordinating Board).

The Secretary-General to initiate a transparent global recruitment process for the new Under-Secretary-General position, in consultation with member states and civil society, to identify candidates with significant stature, competence, credibility and experience in gender equality and/or women's human rights before the end of 2009; And in the interim to establish, without delay a transitional arrangement process to provide needed leadership and preparatory work that will support the new Under-Secretary-General, upon appointment, to move forward expeditiously the establishment of the new women's entity, in consultation with stakeholders, including civil society organizations, and women's groups in particular.

Member states and the Secretary-General to commit to systematic and ongoing consultation with civil society, particularly women's organizations, in every stage of the process at global, regional, national, and local levels, including during the transition, the establishment and the ongoing operation of the new women's entity, including representation on the Executive Board.

WOMEN AND MEN AROUND THE WORLD ARE COUNTING ON YOUR SUPPORT AND POSITIVE ACTION NOW!

August 31, 2009

For further information, please contact: gearcampaign@gmail.com ; +1 732 932-8782

GEAR Campaign Global Focal Points: Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID); Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL); Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN); International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF); Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO).

GEAR Campaign Regional Focal Points: African's Women Development and Communication Network (FEMNET); Asia Pacific Women's Watch (APWW); Collective for Research and Training on Development-Action (CRTD-A); European Women's Lobby (EWL); femLINKpacific; Foundation for Studies and Research on Women (FEIM); Servitas Cameroon; South Asian Campaign for Gender Equality (SACGE)/SAATHI.

More than 310 GEAR Campaign Signatories worldwide:

<http://cwgl.rutgers.edu/globalcenter/policy/unadvocacy/July%202009%20Campaign%20Signatories.pdf>